



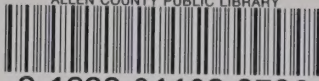


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History of  
Seven Dolors Parish  
of  
Manhattan, KANS.

MANHATTAN, KANS.  
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1887-1888







## HISTORY OF SEVEN DOLORS PARISH OF MANHATTAN

By

Mrs. Alex Irvine

1961

2033614

Today's Manhattanite, viewing the Catholic parish properties and large congregation, may be surprised to learn that the Elbow, Ogden and Rock Creek (Flush) communities had neat stone churches and McDowell an organized congregation before even a few Catholics were gathered in a private home for the celebration of a First Mass in Manhattan. Rock Creek (Flush) had celebrated their First Mass ten years earlier. Some Protestant churches in Manhattan were several years old when Father Dumortier, S.J. celebrated Manhattan's First Mass in the Matthew Peak home in 1865. The Peak's daughter, Rose, was baptised that day. Her fate is revealed by an inscription on a marble tombstone in St. Patrick's Cemetery on the Elbow. It reads: Rosie---Died Feb. 9 1867---Aged 1 yr 3 mos 24 das; Augustus---Died Oct. 22 1866---Aged 3 yrs 6 mos 16 das---Children of Mathias & Christina Peak. The gavel used by the president of the Altar Society is made of walnut from the Peak table that served for an Altar for that First Mass. In 1868, Mrs. J. F. Ellicott, a niece of Archbishop W. H. Elder of Cincinnati, came with her family to Manhattan. Her home became the center of the little Catholic activity.

The beloved Father Louis Dumortier, S.J., who began his ministrations to the Catholics in this part of Kansas in 1859, died in July, 1867 at Ft. Harker (near Ellsworth). He had gone there to nurse the sick and console the dying soldiers during a plague epidemic. Father Dumortier contracted the disease which proved fatal.

From 1867 to 1875, Fathers Joseph F. Rimmele, S.J. and P. L. Van de Bergh, S.J. attended as best they could the Catholics in Manhattan and surrounding communities. These Jesuits couldn't come often, for their Mission territory extended from St. Marys on the east to Ft. Harker (Ellsworth) on the west; from the northern border of Kansas to Emporia, Council Grove and Cottonwood Falls on the south. They traveled pony back, carrying Mass equipment in saddle bags and depending on settlers for bed and board and a room to celebrate Mass for as many Catholics as could come. Sometimes, the host Catholics provided shelter for those who lived too far to make the trip before Mass time, making it necessary for them to come the day before. On a map made by Father Dumortier in 1866, he designated churches with double armed crosses and stations (places other than churches where Mass was celebrated) with single armed Roman Crosses. There were many stations between the few churches. He gave the following data on memberships in 1866: Solomon, 300; Chapman, 165; Ft. Riley, 150; Rock Creek, 132; Junction City, 100; Ogden, 96; McDowell, 80; Elbow, 70. Manhattan wasn't even mentioned.

In 1875, Father Lager was appointed as resident pastor at Rock Creek (Flush) with Elbow, Wamego and Manhattan as Missions. In 1877, Kansas' first diocese was established with Leavenworth as See City. In 1879, Father Nuttmann succeeded Father Lager at Rock Creek. He also attended the Missions of Elbow, Wamego and Manhattan.

In 1880, the Manhattan Methodists dedicated their second church, located on the NW corner of Sixth and Poyntz. Their old church facing Pierre on the NE corner of Pierre and Juliette was for sale. This first church of the Methodists was started in 1857, completed and dedicated in 1860. It was 23 ft. wide, 35 ft. long and 12 ft. to the eaves. It cost \$4,500; was built of white limestone and had pews,







pulpit and interior woodwork of native black walnut secured from a farm four miles north of Manhattan (NE 1/4 S31 T9 R8), presently owned by the George Irvines.

The few Manhattan Catholics hoped to buy this old Methodist church but two problems presented themselves: They feared prejudice would prevent a sale to them; and how could they raise the \$1400. sale price? Father Nuttmann encouraged them, a non-Catholic lawyer of Wamego negotiated the purchase, and a non-Catholic Manhattan business man helped to raise \$800. as a down payment. Notes were given for the balance. It was a bold action for the few Catholics to take. Bishop Fink of the Leavenworth Diocese wished the Elbow Catholics to unite with Manhattan, but they had their church and refused. Some of the early parishioners were: Mrs. J. T. Ellicott, her brother, Basil Elder, Mrs. J. F. Mensing, Miss Sally McMinnimin, Miss Winnie Flanagan, Miss Susan Shaw, Miss Sarah McDermott, Mrs. McMillan and her family, H. C. W. Filiatrault and the Frank Peak family. In recognition of Mrs. Ellicott's work for the church, Father Nuttmann gave her the privilege of naming the church and she chose Seven Dolours. She secured most of the altar furnishings through her uncle, Archbishop Elder, and other relatives. The church was dedicated by Father van der Eerden, S.J., President of St. Mary's Mission, assisted by Father van der Bergh, S. J. and the pastor, Father Nuttmann. Father van der Bergh remained to give a three day mission.

On August 5, 1881, Rev. A. T. Ennis was appointed by Bishop Fink of the Leavenworth Diocese as a resident pastor of Manhattan with Elbow, Ogden and McDowell as missions. Manhattan was centrally located among these parishes but the congregations of the missions were larger at that time. The Bishop might have foreseen chances for greater development there. Father Ennis was born in Rome and ordained for the Covington, Kentucky, Diocese. His salary in 1882 was \$137.56 and he paid \$180.00 on the debt.

In August 1884, Rev. D. D. Curtin succeeded Father Ennis. He paid the church debt and built a rectory in 1885. It was a frame structure of six rooms, three downstairs and three upstairs. It cost \$531.95 and occupied the same site as the present rectory. Rev. John F. Lee was appointed pastor in June 1886. He was able to get the interdict imposed on the Elbow parish by Bishop Fink in 1883 removed.

This is a list of the many pastors that spent the next 13 years in Manhattan: Rev. Edward F. Dooley, May to August 1889; Rev. Bernard Martin, August 1889; Rev. J. H. Schulze, June 1892; Rev. Gustav Lecoutere, September 1893; Rev. Robert Loehrer, March 1896; Rev. John C. Regan, June 1898; and Rev. Patrick Shields, November 1899.

The Concordia Diocese was established in 1887 but Riley County remained in the Leavenworth Diocese until 1897. Elbow, being in Pottawatomie County, a part of the Leavenworth Diocese, was annexed to Wamego as a mission when Riley County became a part of the Concordia Diocese. This arrangement lasted for 17 years until 1914 when Elbow was temporarily attached to Manhattan. However, this temporary transfer lasted until the Elbow Church was closed in December 1928.

Father Shields was at Manhattan for eight years, by far the longest tenure of any priest up to this time. Due to ill health, he resigned a month before his death in October, 1907.

The parish could not be described as prosperous when Father M. J. M. Reade, a former Jesuit, came to the parish in September, 1907. It was 42 years since the First Mass in Manhattan. The congregation was still quite small and the property consisted of the little second hand church bought 27 years earlier and a 22







year old frame rectory. At one time the property was to be sold for improvement taxes when Bishop Cunningham came to the rescue and paid the tax. Father Reade has been described as a man of remarkable zeal, ability and self sacrifice. He inspired the parishioners toward greater Catholic activity. He redecorated the church and built a vestibule, but he is mainly remembered for his interest in Catholic education. He bought the Colonel Anderson home diagonally across the intersection from the church in 1908 for \$14,000. Non-Catholics as well as Catholics donated toward its purchase.

A cross was placed atop this three story with basement house, and it was placed under the patronage of the Sacred Heart. It was a large, beautiful, sturdily built home of stone with large rooms, wide halls, high ceilings, lovely woodwork, a sweeping staircase and spacious porches amid a landscaped yard.

Sacred Heart Academy opened in September, 1908 with Sisters of St. Joseph from Concordia in charge. Sister M. Louise, Ph.D., was supervisor and Sisters M. Aquina, M. Geraldine, M. Cornelius, M. Rita, M. Mildred completed the staff. There were about 40 students in the grade school and first year of high school. Each year thereafter, another year of high school was added, so by September 1911, a full four year course was offered. It was the first complete high school course offered in Manhattan (the State College offered a prep course) and it was the first Catholic High School in the Concordia Diocese. Sacred Heart Academy offered another first, educationally, in Manhattan, when a Business Course was started. For a number of years students with a common school diploma could get a certificate in the Business Course with one year's intensive training; later, the course was extended to cover two years if the student had no high school credits. When the time came that nearly all students stayed for the four years of high school, this special commercial course was discontinued and the commercial subjects were incorporated in the regular high school courses. While it was offered, many non-Catholics enrolled in the special Commercial Course and the high tuition asked for this course helped the struggling school financially.

For many years, the Academy building served the entire school system, provided a home for the teaching Sisters and offered accommodations for boarding students. Girls not only from the environs of Manhattan, but from other parts of the state and even out-of-state girls boarded there. Occasionally, homeless children were taken in until a permanent home could be found. One boarder remembers that for a short time, there were 17, including 2 or 3 pre-schoolers staying there besides the Sisters. In pre-automobile days, distance forced many high school students to board in or near school. If the family was acquainted with some Sister, even in a remote school, they would send their daughters there to board.

Father Reade kept in constant contact with the work in the school. Students of his day recall he walked very erect, always wore a top hat and frock coat and used a cane. The staccato thumps of his cane on the porch steps drew the attention of all and terrorized those students who had neglected their lessons. He denounced all shoddy school work and he especially censured those who had not learned their catechism. Recently, a non-Catholic woman, who had attended the Academy as a child, said that she was on friendlier terms with Father Reade than many of the Catholic children because she did not have to study catechism. He had no housekeeper so the Sisters would send some of the children to the rectory with his lunch and supper. The children sympathized with him when they beheld the look of poverty at the rectory.

Sometimes, the parishioners thought he demanded too much of them, but these feelings were soon tempered when they recalled how he used all his talents and energies in their behalf and in the behalf of extending the Kingdom of God.





He is given credit for giving the Catholics a sense of pride and responsibility beyond mere obligation.

Seven Dolors had Mass only once a month before Father Reade came. On other Sundays, Mass was said at some Mission. Father Reade, after saying Mass at Manhattan, would gallop his ponies to Ogden or McDowell for a late Mass. He insisted on punctuality. Mission services meant not only saying Mass, but hearing confessions, teaching catechism as well and occasionally performing baptisms. A good dinner at some parishioner's was an earthly reward.

On January 11, 1913, Father Reade died suddenly of apoplexy. The Ogden parish seemed to support him better than his other churches and he desired to be buried in the St. Patrick's Cemetery there. Collections to buy a monument were taken up at these churches served by Father Reade. The monument had a base of four feet on which rested a statue of the Sacred Heart six feet high. Manhattan parishioners took the Manhattan-Junction City interurban street car to go to Ogden on Sunday afternoon, May 30, 1915, for the blessing of this monument. Nice stone churches at Ogden and McDowell erected during his pastorate were even greater monuments to his zeal.

In February, 1913, Rev. A. J. Luckey was transferred from Ellsworth, where he was stationed for nine years, to Manhattan, a city of 4,000 people. He proved competent, as we shall relate, to build on the foundation prepared by the Jesuit Missionaries, the early parish priests and Father Reade. The parish had to be classified as struggling for the 25 families still owed \$4,000. on the Sacred Heart Academy and the rectory was far below adequately furnished for even a priest accustomed to pioneering. He insisted on decent furniture to replace the delapidated pieces. He boarded out with Catholic families until a housekeeper could be procured. He not only possessed priestly qualifications, but keen business judgement. His first mundane concern was the liquidation of the parish debt.

At the time of Father Luckey's appointment to Manhattan, Ogden was given a resident pastor with McDowell as a Mission. This relieved the work load, but lessened the priest's support. To offset this loss, St. Patrick's on the Elbow, only four miles from Manhattan, was returned as a Mission. Twice a month, the late Mass was celebrated on the Elbow. Elbow Catholics, if they did not live too far out, attended Mass at Manhattan on their off Sundays, if roads and weather permitted, or at least some of the family tried to go. The Elbow Catholics assisted the Seven Dolors parish in many ways before they were united with them.

The Catholic College students organized in 1912. They held meetings at the Sacred Heart Academy or at the home of members. The first high school graduation occurred in 1912. Perhaps the Altar Society just developed without formal organization. From the beginning of the parish, the women worked hard to advance the spiritual, social and financial activities of the church. From time to time, increase in numbers made organizational changes necessary, but the objectives remained the same. In 1916, the men organized Knights of Columbus Council #1832. They, too, worked for the spiritual and social welfare of the church and have been especially helpful with special projects for the church, school and community. In 1920, a chapter of Phi Kappa Fraternity was started at the College. They were granted a charter the next year. In 1924, the patrons of the parochial school organized a Parent-Teacher Association. In 1926, a Holy Name Society was organized to which all men were expected to join. Each of these organizations are treated more fully elsewhere.







Situated so close to Ft. Riley, the First World War imparted lasting effects on Manhattan and its institutions. Soldiers crowded into Manhattan for recreation and to relieve their loneliness. Father Luckey accepted the chairmanship of the building committee that supervised the building of the Community House and was president of the War Camp Community Service. He was so impressed with the need of army chaplains that he enlisted and was commissioned in August, 1918. This army service led to his being elected first Commander of the Pierce-Keller Post of the American Legion in Manhattan, and the Legion's first State Chaplain. Manhattan's K of C Council #1832, many of whose members were soldiers, took a very active part in supplying needed services for the soldiers. The women of the parish accepted many responsibilities like preparing banquets, inviting soldiers to their homes, and serving on Community House Committees. Father Luckey was a staunch advocate of civic participation. Soon after the war's end in November, Father Luckey was able to return to his pastorate in Manhattan, which was taken over by Father Brown in his absence.

The parish was experiencing accelerated growth in the postwar years. The school was gradually growing in numbers but the Academy seemed, by the standards acceptable at that time, to be able to adequately care for the increase. The desperate need was for a new and much larger church. On Sundays, when there was only one Mass, every available space including the vestibule was taken and some even standing on the walk. In the spring of 1919, a meeting was called and it was decided to go ahead with the new church building which had been planned for several years. On the finance committee were: J. B. Floersch, D. E. Still, P. J. Burns, and O. H. Halstead. C. E. Floersch, Mont J. Green, Vern Ingraham and John H. Peak were appointed members of the building committee. The parish consultants were: C. E. Floersch, A. E. Bailey and William O. Hunt.

H. W. Brinkman of Emporia was the architect. Mont J. Green was given the general contract. Complete harmony in size, design and color characterized the Italian Renaissance type of architecture. It is 66 feet wide, 124 feet long with twin towers 85 feet high in front. The towers are pinnacled with wood crosses covered with copper. The seating capacity is 500 in the main part. The full basement with kitchen, rest rooms, and stage provided a place for meals and entertainment. The heating plant was in the basement also.

The response for donations was generous both from individuals and the various parish organizations. The Altar Society's donations totalled \$5,733. For this church, the Catholics on the Elbow donated generously - the largest single donation was given by Martin Glenn of the Elbow.

The old church was torn down to make room for the new church. Mass was celebrated during the summer of 1920 in the auditorium of the public high school, now the junior high school. The corner-stone was blessed by the Very Rev. John Maher, Diocesan Administrator, on March 25, 1920.

The dedication took place on October 31, 1920, by Rt. Rev. Thomas F. Lillis of Kansas City, who also gave the sermon. Very Rev. A. T. Ennis, first resident pastor celebrated the Mass. The Altar Society served a dinner for the clergy, parishioners and friends. The total cost of the church and furnishings was \$66,577. Just after the dedication of the church, a mission was held, following the example of a mission just after buying of the first church 40 years before.

On Sundays with two Masses (Mass was celebrated twice a month at 10 a.m. at the Elbow) there were so few people to attend that the ushers were told to rope off the back half of the church at the last Mass. It was customary at this time for Catholic churches to assign each family a pew without regard to the size of the family.





Church support was termed pew rent. With the opening of the new church, Father Luckey announced each family would be assigned as many seats as necessary, no more. Certain sections were reserved for the Elbow Catholics and for the College students. This arrangement was soon changed. Names were removed from the pews and seats were available on the "First-Come-take-your-pick" basis. Church support was to be based on ability to pay.

In 1922, there were nine Sisters teaching in eight class rooms. A PTA was organized in 1924 and has been effectively functioning since.

Mr. & Mrs. E. B. Purcell who lived in a big house across Juliette from the church buildings were good friends of Father Luckey and benefactors of Catholic undertakings especially Sacred Heart Academy. They requested Father Luckey to conduct their funerals in their home. They died about a month apart in 1924. The parochial school children were permitted to attend their funeral.

In 1925, the old frame rectory built in 1885 was sold and moved away so a new rectory could be erected on the site. Mont Green built a modern eight room rectory of brick to match the church for \$10,000. In 1947, a seldom used side porch was remodeled into an apartment for the pastor. This enclosure cost about \$2,700.

The financial report of 1925 states that in the period of 1920 to 1925, \$82,000. had been spent for new buildings and furnishings and in addition several thousand dollars were spent on school improvement and equipment. More than 3/4 of these obligations were already paid.

In 1925, Bishop Tief took Father Luckey as his secretary on a trip to Europe and the Holy Lands. Although not an extensive tour, it was a great experience for Father Luckey. During his absence, Father Duchene cared for the parish.

The Holy Name Society was organized in 1926 and every man in the parish was expected to belong and take an active part. Their objectives are mainly in the spiritual line but they do sponsor spiritual-related projects like radio lectures.

Shortly after the building of the new church in Manhattan, services on the Elbow were reduced to one Mass a month - the second Sunday. In 1928, the St. Patrick Church on the Elbow was closed with the consent of the congregation and the parishioners were to go to Seven Dolors unless they were nearer to Flush.

Father Luckey accompanied Bishop Noll, of Sunday Visitor fame, on an extensive tour of Europe and the Holy Lands in 1929. On this trip, he celebrated his Silver Jubilee Mass of his ordination in June at the birth place of his father, Crossmaglen County, Armagh, Ireland. Father Spaulding was in charge of Seven Dolors during his absence.

The First Presbyterian Church of Manhattan installed a new pipe organ in the summer of 1930. Their old Kilgen organ was installed in Seven Dolors for \$2,000.

In 1934, Father Luckey was appointed a Domestic Prelate by Pope Pius XI. The parish honored him with a lovely banquet and program after his investiture on February 27, 1935.

Monsignor Luckey was instrumental in securing the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia to buy and operate the St. Mary Hospital in 1936. It was formerly the Charlotte Swift Hospital.





Father Jaster came in 1937 to be Chaplain of the hospital and be an assistant at Seven Dolors. Father Hogan succeeded him in 1938.

Fortunately in 1938, when more school rooms were absolutely necessary, the First Methodist Church had their frame annex, 40 ft. x 75 ft., for sale. It was purchased for the parish, cut in thirds and moved just south of the stone Academy building. When reassembled and remodeled, it provided three nice class rooms for an outlay of \$3,000. For the first time, the grade and high school occupied separate buildings.

On Sunday, December 28, 1941, Mrs. Mike Umscheid brought some children to see the crib. She was shocked to see, when she entered the church, the statuary and decorations of the crib torn down and the statue of the Blessed Virgin demolished. Two angel statues holding candelabra on the main Altar were broken and the dome over the high Altar overturned. Candle sticks, decorations and Altar Cards were destroyed. Cloths on all Altars torn off and the Sanctuary Lamp pulled down. Chairs, kneeling benches, lectern and votive stands were overturned. The wine and water cruets broken. The statue of the Sacred Heart, the large crucifix and the Tabernacle were not damaged. No one could give any explanation except contemptible vandalism. There was a C.C. Camp located in Manhattan and the boys were hauled to work details out of town. One of these boys gave some information to the authorities that led to the arrest of a fellow worker. He confessed. He was a religious fanatic and was against all organized religions. Monsignor asked for clemency for him when he learned he was a 19 year old youth. He did serve some time in an institution for this deed. There was about \$500 damage.

By 1943, the church and school memberships were increasing rapidly. For the first time since the building of the church in 1920, the parish had no debt. This year, the Purcell home just across Juliette from the church was purchased for \$3,000. This red brick house of twelve rooms was built in 1869 on four lots. It, with the Major Adams house across the alley on the north and the Colonel Anderson home across Pierre on the south were early day show places in Manhattan. Mr. Purcell was a very prominent business man. The home, recently remodeled into undesirable apartments, was torn down and the lots used for parking until a high school could be built.

The church was redecorated in 1944. Following is a quote from the Manhattan Mercury, Sunday, September 24, 1944:

"Work of renovating the interior of the Seven Dolors Church, which was begun in June has just been completed, the Rt. Rev. Monsgr. Luckey, pastor, announced. Walls of the church have been painted, woodwork varnished, pews taken up and floors sanded and refinished. The Altar, statuary, stations of the cross and art glass windows cleaned. Thermo-plastic tile floors have been laid in the sanctuary, the aisles and the vestibule. As the architectural lines in Romanesque style of the church are well proportioned, the decorative plan is designed to emphasize it. This is done by partly using Caen-stone color on the pilasters and arches, bordered by stencil designs. A six color harmonized effect is used in the nave of the church and finished with a starch coat to retain the luster of the paint. The sanctuary is finished in a solid stencil designed, panelled so as to give prominence to the Altar. Five colors are used in the panels with gold leaf border. A medallion symbolizing eternity, the river of life, the trinity and adoring Christ, and the Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin are above the doors on either side of the sanctuary.





The designing and work was done by the church artist, Alex Linenberger of Hays, who has decorated many large churches in Kansas. Concealed fluorescent lamps illuminate the Sanctuary and bring out the colors in the decorative design. Foam rubber cushions have been installed on all the kneeler benches in the pews. The pews have been varnished. A few generous donations helped meet the total expense of \$9,500. The local council of K of C has arranged for the painting of the church hall in the basement and the PTA has painted the kitchen and dining room used for hot lunches for the school children."

An addition 32x36 ft. for a new class room, corridor and principal's office was added to the frame school building in 1945. The cost was about \$8,000. In 1946, there were 152 grade school students and 70 high school students.

A mission was held in 1945 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the building of the new church.

In 1947, a seldom used side porch on the rectory was enclosed and remodelled into a bedroom-bath-office apartment for the pastor. The cost was about \$2,700.

To celebrate Monsignor Luckey's 35th anniversary as pastor of Seven Dolors, a parish banquet was held in February, 1948.

In 1950, the contract to build the new parochial high school was given the Green Construction Company. The architectural plans were provided by F. O. Wolfenbarger and Associates. It was to be erected on the Purcell property across from the church. By popular desire, the new high school was named Luckey High School in honor of Monsignor Luckey because of his great interest in Catholic education. The cornerstone was laid on January 9, 1951. It contained a page from Our Sunday Visitor edited by the students of Sacred Heart Academy. Monsignor Raymond Menard delivered the address.

Two tragedies occurred in 1951. Monsignor Luckey was returning to the rectory after leading a Rosary at the Conroy Chapel and as he started across Poyntz on a green light, a car made a right hand turn into Poyntz from Juliette. He jumped when it was evident the car would strike him, but he was knocked down and his hip broke in the fall. After several weeks in the hospital, he returned to his duties first using crutches, then a cane and by persistent effort was later able to walk alone. While Monsignor Luckey was in the hospital, the great flood of 1951 occurred.

### FLOOD OF 1951

Serious flood crests occurred at Manhattan on June 9, June 17, June 23, but no one was prepared for the cataclysmic crest of 34 feet on July 13. Besides the usual equipment in the church basement, \$5,000. worth of new furniture for the new high school was stored there. Thanks to nearby parishioners and the National Guard, all this equipment was moved to the upper part of the church and saved from damage. The basements of church, rectory and Academy were filled with water and the ground floor of the new high school had some water. Fortunately, the new maple floor on the gym had not been laid. Mass was said two or three Sundays in the shelter house at the city park.

Parishioners cleaned up the basement and as the stage would no longer be needed for entertainments when the high school auditorium could be used, it was torn out. This left much more room for meal service. Every part of the basement was re-decorated and new stoves bought to replace the old ones. Headlines in The North-





western Kansas Register of Nov. 4, called the readers' attention to the generous mission donations of two parishes that suffered serious flood damage. Manhattan donated \$775; Soloman, \$193.

The three Masses held on Sundays since 1943 were inadequate to care for the growing congregation, so a fourth Mass was added in 1951.

The dedication of Luckey High School took place on February 6, 1952. The portrait of Monsignor Luckey, painted by Elfreda Johnson Peterson, a gift of the class of 1951, was unveiled that day. This portrait now hangs in the main corridor. Most Reverend Frank Thill, D.D., Bishop of Salina, assisted by Rt. Rev. John A. Duskie conducted the blessing and dedication ceremonies. Robert Irvine, Sr., a committeeman, was master of ceremonies; Harold Howe and Mayor Z. R. Hook gave talks. The cost of this building was about \$208,000.

The parish helped Monsignor Luckey celebrate the Golden Jubilee of his ordination in January, 1954. His health impaired, and knowing major parish projects should be started to keep in step with enlarging membership, he asked to be retired on February 1, 1954. He came to Seven Dolors as a young priest of 35 and was retiring at the age of 76. There were 25 families in the parish when he came and 550 envelope holders when he retired. The town's population had increased from 4,000 to about 18,000.

Monsignor Luckey took up residence at St. Joseph's Hospital in Concordia. He died there December 15, 1954. Requiem Mass was celebrated in Seven Dolors Church and he was buried in the Catholic section of Sunset Cemetery. A granite stone marks his grave. His will bequeathed \$20,000 for two seminary burses for the Salina Diocese, boys from Seven Dolors to be given preference. He also left \$20,000 for a grade school building in Manhattan.

#### MONSIGNOR WILLIAM MERCHANT COMES TO MANHATTAN

The vacancy left by the resignation of Monsignor Luckey was filled on March 14, 1954 by the appointment of Monsignor William Merchant by Bishop Frank A. Thill after a meeting with the Parish Priest Consultors. He had been pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Clay Center for eight years and before that had served the parishes of Selden, Clifton and Junction City and had been an assistant at the Sacred Heart Parish in Salina, and Chaplain at St. John's Hospital, Salina.

Two more Sunday Masses were added shortly after Monsignor Merchant came to Manhattan. These new Masses were at 6:30 a.m. and 12 noon. The other Masses were at 8, 9, 10 and 11 a.m. Canonical approval was given in 1954 to repair the rectory boiler for \$1500.

On April 7, 1954, Monsignor Merchant called a parish meeting to discuss the building of two urgently needed parish units: a new grade school and a convent for the Sisters. Two weeks later, a drive was started under the chairmanship of William Farrell assisted by the building and finance committee, composed of T. J. Griffith, Dr. Harold Howe and Mont Green, Jr. The Sisters told the parish to build the new grade school or at least a part of it before starting a convent.





1955

On Sunday, March 13, 1955, the first four rooms of the new grade school were dedicated. Each room was built to accommodate 60 pupils. The cost was \$70,000. An earnest drive was started for a convent building fund.

During 1955, the first of a series of TV programs were given on WIBW-TV. They were sponsored by the local K of C and prepared by George Carrol and John Noonan with assists from other members of the parish. The Christmas program featured a talk by Msgr. Merchant with music by the Seven Dolores Choir. Other programs told of the work of the Jesuits and Benedictines. Soldiers from Ft. Riley performed on one program; appearing about the time of the opening of the new Phi Kappa House. One program was devoted to activities of Catholic College students.

Riley Park, the west three acres of the City jail property just across Juliette from the parochial school property, was dedicated on July 24, 1955. It was made possible through the joint efforts of the local K of C and the Recreation Commission.

The church committee was increased to 10 members.

The 1956 Confirmation Class numbered 257.

1957

The Altar Society provided the \$3,500. necessary to repair the pipe organ.

Father John Moeder celebrated his First Mass on April 17, 1957. It was followed with a banquet and reception.

While all the Sisters were at Mass one Sunday in May, the Convent was robbed of \$400. most of it being payment for school tuition. The parish took up a special collection to make up the deficit.

Bishop Frank Thill died on May 21, 1957.

On August 11, 1957, the parish held open house for the new convent, just completed for the teaching Sisters. It was designed by Wolfenbarger and Associates and built by the Green Construction Company. It contained a lovely little chapel and living quarters for about 18 Sisters. The cost was approximately \$90,000. Most of the furnishings were given by the Altar Society.

Bishop Frederick W. Freking was consecrated in Rome for the Salina Diocese on November 30, 1957.

1958

This seems to be the year of awards to persons connected with Seven Dolores.

Wolfenbarger and Associates were awarded first place in the class of Catholic Institutional Design for their plans of the convent.





Monsignor Merchant was given an award by the Rockne Club (Notre Dame Alumni) for "Outstanding and Meritorious Service to Youth".

Mont Green, Sr., was invested as a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre.

Monsignor Merchant conducted one of the Directors Meetings held in connection with the National Council of Catholic Youth at their convention at Williamsburg, Virginia.

Bishop Freking was installed as Bishop of Salina on January 7, 1958.

1959

The governor of Kansas appointed Monsignor Merchant as a member of the Committee to prepare the 6th White House Conference on Children and Youth to be held in Washington D.C. in March, 1960.

In March, 1959, triplets were born to the Marion Temples at the Saint Mary Hospital. It was the first recorded birth of triplets in Manhattan. The family were one time residents of Manhattan and Mrs. Temple was a member of Seven Dolores Parish.

1960

By 1960, the parish had bought three of the four residences in the same block with the Seven Dolores Grade School and the Convent. This additional ground will be necessary for future expansion.

Monsignor Merchant was named associate director of Kansas Region of National Council of Catholic Youth.

Sister Stephen received \$800 research grant from Future Scientists of America. She used the grant to purchase science equipment for Luckey High School.

Confirmation class of 1960 consisted of 258 of which 64 were adults.

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In the 95 years, the congregation has grown to about 2,500 not counting the 800 college students, 150 of whom are married. The school enrollment is 600.

Two priests have said their First Mass at Seven Dolores and eleven young ladies have entered Sisterhoods.

There have been 1,395 persons confirmed since records were kept.





## RT. REV. ARTHUR J. LUCKEY, L.L.D. L.H.D.

Arthur J. Luckey was born at Greenleaf, Kansas, in Washington County, on August 15, 1877, the oldest of eight children of pioneer parents who came to Kansas to break the virgin sod. Arthur, as a boy, read by the light of a coal oil lamp; participated in spelling bees at the school house; studied catechism and learned the discipline of correct living from his good parents and the parish priests.

He graduated from Greenleaf High School in 1895. He seriously considered entering West Point or the legal profession when he started to St. Benedict's College at Atchison, Kansas. People who knew him in later life remarked that he would have been a success in either of these fields. He was active in College organizations. By graduation time in 1900, he had decided to enter Kenrick Seminary. After the completion of the four year Seminary Course, he was ordained there on June 10, 1904 by Archbishop Glennon. Seven days later, he celebrated his First Solemn Mass at Greenleaf. It turned into a civic celebration and the young priest was escorted through the town by the band. He was the first diocesan born priest in the Concordia Diocese.

Bishop Cunningham appointed him in July to a temporary assignment at Ellsworth, Kansas. In later years, Monsignor Luckey said that the sight of the Ellsworth church property was so depressing that, although he could be classed as a teetotaler where liquor was concerned, he took a drink of wine to bolster his spirits. Recovering from the initial shock, the energetic, conscientious young priest set to work to improve the parish spiritually and materially. This temporary assignment lasted nine years. The loneliness and frustration of this pastorate is dramatically told by Bishop Kelley in the third chapter of his book, "Story of Extension". A copy of that chapter may be found with this article and clippings about the status of the Ellsworth Church after fifty years may be found in the historical folder. Monsignor Luckey lived to see fruition of the work he performed as a young priest.

In 1913, he was transferred to the Seven Dolores Parish in Manhattan. He found a struggling parish of 25 families; but a parish inspired by the six year pastorate of Father M.J.M. Reade, a priest grateful for his conversion, who had left a home of affluence to join the Jesuits and later, realizing the need of parish priests, spent the last years of his life as a Diocesan Priest in the Concordia Diocese. Inured as Father Luckey was to pioneer poverty, the sight of the 38 year old rectory at Manhattan was a shock to him. Bricks substituted for one leg of the little coal cook stove. A small potbellied heater, a few chairs, a table and bed, all showing many years of service completed the furnishings. He told the church committee they would have to improve his living quarters or he would not stay. That beginning set the pattern for future relations between pastor and parishioners in Manhattan. He not only used his ability and energy to better church facilities, but his interest extended to civic, state and national affairs. He expected the same interest from the parishioners. To save expenses, he boarded with a Catholic family for awhile. Miss Mary Moheng kept house for him for many years until her death from cancer in 1950.

The first material concern of the new Manhattan priest was the liquidation of the \$4,000. debt on the Sacred Heart Academy. At the time of his appointment to Manhattan, Ogden was given a resident pastor with McDowell as a mission. The loss of these two missions, although relieving the work load, cut off considerable revenue. The adjacent parish of Elbow only four miles from Manhattan had been a mission of Wamego for 17 years, dating back to the time Riley County had been transferred to the Concordia Diocese. The Manhattan Parish was happy to get it back as a





mission in 1914, as it helped substantially to support the pastor. Late Mass was celebrated twice each month, on holidays and All Souls' Day at Elbow. Roads were unsurfaced so the four mile trip to Elbow in bad weather was a trial. It was common knowledge that Father Luckey's brilliant mind did not lean toward mechanics. His Ford often stopped on the muddy roads and he was known to remove his shoes and wade out through the mud to crank his "flivver". He brought a lunch to break his fast after late Mass at Elbow. Several times, the hot coffee from his thermos was used to pour over the carburetor to get the engine started for the trip home. In later years, he enjoyed telling this story.

When all eleven members of the Ed Cunningham family came to church on the Elbow, they used two cars, or vehicles. After Mass one Sunday, Father Luckey was looking for Ed and seeing Isabel, the family three year old, asked her where her father was. In childish innocence, she answered, "Oh, he's gone home. He said he wanted to get away before you tried to start your car".

When war broke out in 1917, Father Luckey threw his whole-hearted support to any activity for the benefit of the soldiers at Ft. Riley. On June 5, 1917, the Manhattan Council of War Camp Community Service was organized. Father Luckey was chairman of the Public Officials Defense Group. He was the only member that served on both three-man committees that supervised the building of the Community House at Fourth and Humboldt. Seeing the dearth of Catholic Chaplains at Ft. Riley, he enlisted in August 1918, serving until after the war closed. Chaplains at the Fort held meetings to discuss common problems. The Protestant Ministers were always seeking ways to reach the boys. Father Luckey took no part in these discussions for his problem was how to serve all the boys that came to services. Noting his disinterest, they said that you have the Mass.

Father Luckey returned to Manhattan and relieved Father Brown who had taken care of the Manhattan parish the few months Father Luckey was in the service. He was elected First Commander of Pierce-Keller Post of the American Legion, and was the Legion's first State Chaplain.

During the summer of 1920, he was busy supervising to the smallest detail, the construction of the new church. Sometimes, tempers flared and he told of one very hot day when several things about the church building were going wrong and a representative of the Catholic War Service approached and told him the Service was ready to do something for Manhattan. Father Luckey had pleaded in vain for this Service to do something toward a Catholic Center when it was so badly needed during the war. He said they helped Junction City but never came to investigate the situation in Manhattan. He gave the representative a piece of his mind as the need was now past, before he calmed down. The small amount of money offered was later used for the Phi Kappas, who had many veterans among their membership, and was just getting started as a Catholic Organization at the College.

In 1922, Father Luckey wrote the history of the Seven Dolors Parish. While searching for material at St. Marys College, he came upon the baptismal record of Charles Curtis, a Kansan with some Indian ancestry, who served in Congress and was elected vice-president of U. S. He received a Doctor of Laws Degree from St. Mary's College in 1925.

The new rectory was built in 1925 and Father Luckey accompanied Bishop Tief to Europe. Father Duchene cared for the parish in his absence.

In 1929, Father Spaulding took charge of the Manhattan parish while Father Luckey took an extensive tour of Europe with Bishop Noll of "Our Sunday Visitor"





fame. In Lisieux, they had an interview with Mother Agnes, a sister of St. Theresa, the Little Flower. Mother Agnes handed him a roll of prints, a gift from the French people to take to the Pope. When the Pope had blessed them, he handed one to Father Luckey as a gift. This treasured gift was framed and hung in the Mothers' Room of Seven Dolors for many years. He celebrated his Silver Jubilee Mass of his ordination in June at his father's birthplace, Crossmaglen Co., Armagh, Ireland.

The Catholic Rural Life movement, spearheaded by Father Edwin V. O'Hara in the 1920's attracted his attention. He served as its second President from 1928 to 1930. This movement launched the Religious Vacation Schools and Religious Correspondence Courses. The first schools in the Concordia Diocese were at Kimeo and Greenleaf in 1937. By 1948, Vacation Schools were held in every parish in the diocese.

Anything pertaining to education interested Father Luckey. He helped get legislation for school bus transportation and free text books for children of indigent parents going to Catholic schools. He encouraged the College Newman Club and sought outside aid for them when he could not give them the time they needed. He was secretary of the Diocesan School Board for 25 years and then its president.

During the winter of 1933-1934, he suffered from throat trouble that left him unable to speak aloud. He quit smoking and spent some time in the mild and dry climate of Texas. While there, he came in contact with Missionary Priests. After he improved and came back to his work here, he tried to help these Priests in every way he could. One Missionary had a candle mold so he could melt stubs of wax candles and mold his altar candles. Father Luckey would gather up pieces of candles and send to him.

His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, appointed him a Domestic Prelate on November 30, 1934. He got his first notification through the local Associated Press. He always tried to live frugally and his housekeeper said his first reaction was regret for he did not want to spend the money necessary for appropriate clothing. The Investiture took place February 27, 1935, Bishop Tief officiating. That evening, the parish gave a banquet in his honor.

The parish gave a banquet to celebrate either his 20th or 25th year here. He was always particular about his attire and his housekeeper said this event came as such a complete surprise for him that when he was summoned to come to the church basement where the parishioners had gathered, he was wearing a not-too-clean collar.

In 1936, Dr. Belle wished to retire and offered for sale the hospital her doctor father had built and named for her mother, Charlotte Swift. Not getting bidders to run it as a hospital, she told the realtors to sell for any purpose. Father Luckey found out an organization not good for a college town was about to buy it. He contacted the Chamber of Commerce and they were aroused to action. Father Luckey contacted the Mother of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia to see if they would buy and operate it. They had just built a hospital and didn't feel like they could take on another project at this time. When Dr. Belle Little was informed of the situation, she definitely didn't want the hospital she and her father had established to fall into the hands of unscrupulous persons. She offered to reduce the sale price substantially if the Sisters would buy it. The Sisters agreed and always regarded Dr. Belle Little as one of their great benefactors. It was renamed the Saint Mary Hospital. In 1937, another priest was assigned Manhattan to be Chaplain at the hospital and assist at Seven Dolors.





In 1937, an original pen sketch of the church, drawn by Mrs. Albert Dickens, a non-Catholic, appeared for the first time on the annual parish report. Several reports before had photographs of the church.

Always on the lookout for a bargain, in 1938, Monsignor Luckey bought the Methodist Annex, moved it beside the Academy building and remodeled it into three class rooms. Later another room, corridor and Principal's office were added.

In 1939, Monsignor Luckey was given the honor of administering the oath of office to Governor Payne Ratner.

The E. B. Purcell home just across the street from the church, once considered a show place, fell into disrespectful days after the death of Mr. & Mrs. Purcell. There existed a deep friendship between Monsignor Luckey and the Purcells. They assisted him financially and often invited him for meals. They died very close together and Father Luckey was asked and permitted to conduct their funerals. The school children were permitted to attend. After their deaths, the house was divided into apartments that weren't very desirable. It posed a problem for the church. In 1943, the parish bought the property and tore the house down. It was used for a parking lot until the High School named in honor of Monsignor Luckey was built there.

In 1948, the local Council of the Knights of Columbus arranged a banquet honoring Monsignor Luckey, their Chaplain and charter member, for 35 years service to the Manhattan church. Prominent business and professional people were invited and seemed very happy to accept.

The last big undertaking of Monsignor Luckey was the building of the high school that bears his name. An incident occurring during its building gives an indication of his courage to face opposition when he felt he was in the right. Pickets, representing the Topeka A. F. of L. International Brotherhood of Radio and Electrical Workers, stopped work on the new school. They were trying to force local electricians to affiliate with the Topeka electricians. Since this was a jurisdictional strike and not a question of employing Union labor, and as the local men preferred their own Local, Monsignor Luckey decided to take a hand. He told the pickets the Academy students objected strongly to the delay in construction and were prepared to take action. The students threatened to picket the pickets carrying placards stating their objections and Monsignor said he'd have a newspaper photographer take pictures of them. The pickets wanted none of this and asked him to call the Union President in Topeka. He told them to do their own calling which they did. Next day, an 18 year old picket appeared but left when threatened with the same measures.

The name Sacred Heart Academy disappeared after the erection of the new high school, which was to be called Luckey. The grade school to be known as Seven Dolors\*\*

One evening in 1951 after leading a Rosary service at the Conroy Funeral Home, he was crossing Poyntz at Juliette to return to the rectory when a car made a right turn striking Monsignor down, breaking his hip. He never brought charges against the driver. He was in the hospital convalescing from this accident when the big flood occurred. He was back saying Mass as soon as he could walk with a cane. He recovered very well from the hip injury, but his general health deteriorated after a stomach ulcer operation performed at the Mayo Clinic several years before.





To celebrate his Golden Anniversary of his ordination, the congregation prepared a banquet in January 1954. He told his parishioners more buildings were absolutely necessary but he didn't feel he was able to assume the supervision of such activities so he was tendering his resignation effective February 1, 1954.

A touching farewell reception was given him. Tears were in evidence as long time parishioners told of various activities during the 41 years of his pastorate in Manhattan. Monsignor wept as both the front and back doors were thrown open and column after column of school children marched in to stand in prearranged formation in front of the stage and sing a farewell song. What a contrast this large gathering of school children when compared to the handful in the parochial school when he first came to Manhattan! Some of the gifts he received were: Newman Club, \$50.; K of C, typewriter table; Fourth Degree K of C, a typewriter; from the parish, desk, chair, rug and other furniture for his rooms at the St. Joseph Hospital at Concordia, where he was to spend his last days. His physical condition gradually worsened. By December, 1954, it was evident the end was not far off. Still thinking of others, he hoped the end would come before the Diocesan priests were busy with their Christmas duties. His wish was granted for he died on December 15, 1954. The Requiem Mass attended by Bishop Thill, Abbot MacDonald, O.S.B., 71 priests and Monsignori was held in Seven Dolors Church. The choir was composed of 40 voices from the Ft. Riley choir.

A grey granite marker was placed at his grave in Sunset Cemetery.

He willed \$20,000 toward a grade school building and \$20,000. for two diocesan seminary burses, preference to be given boys from Manhattan.

Father Luckey's father was a frequent visitor in Manhattan. He was of a social nature and enjoyed meeting the many parishioners he knew and visiting with them in front of the church. Although Msgr. Luckey was tall, his father was quite short and dressed rather youthfully (always wore a cap) even to the last and he lived to be in the upper 90's. He donated a ciborium and the Sacred Heart side altar for the church.

\*In 1948 at the banquet for Msgr. Luckey, he received the honor of a L.H.D. degree from St. Benedict's College, Atchison.

\*\*At the dedication of Luckey High School, a portrait of Monsignor Luckey painted by Elfreda Johnson Peterson, a gift of the graduating class of 1951, was unveiled.





Quoting from  
"The Story of Extension - Chapter the Third"

I was to lecture in another Kansas town, Ellsworth, in the Diocese of Concordia. At a station ten miles out, a priest got on the train. I saw him enter the car and walk down the aisle as if looking for someone. He stopped at my seat, "Are you Father Kelley?" he asked. When I answered "Yes" and made room for him beside me, he sat down in an embarrassed sort of way, seemingly hunting for words to explain something. When he found them, he said "You are to lecture tonight in Ellsworth. I am pastor there, Father Luckey. You wrote to me - and I did not answer. It was not that I did not appreciate your courtesy, but because I should have invited you to be a guest in my house. I could not do that, but I have engaged the best room at the hotel for you and I want you to take a meal with me tonight. Then you will understand why I could not very well invite you to stay with me."

I assured Father Luckey that I was glad to accept his arrangements. He stayed with me for the rest of the journey, accompanied me to the hotel on arrival, and then brought me to his house. When I saw it, I understood, just as he said I should; and, sitting at his poor board with all the signs of his poverty - and his Master's too--around me, I heard my hero speak to me (hero refers to his conscience). This is what he said to me, "You thought that you were poorest and most afflicted pastor in the country. Look about you. You have never suffered as this man is suffering; yet you were always very ready with your complaints. See the poor little church on the other side of the street. Your old one was far better, but you were not satisfied. Maybe old John Cronin was right. Well, what are you going to do about all this? Don't you remember what Bishop Hennessey said? Are you still waiting for 'someone else' to make a move? 'Someone else' has been thinking about it for fifty years, and what has come of it? Wake up and take this thing to heart."

Not until the following morning, however, did the audience of one "wake up". At the station, I left my new friend with a parting handshake. I saw him on the platform as the train moved out for Kansas City. All alone in my seat, I began to think of the dark days in Lapeer, days that I would not want to live over again. It was the awful lonesomeness of the boy-priest that lingered most in my thoughts that morning. I could see myself get off at the ugly depot and walk alone among strangers through the streets of the town to my dry goods box church. \*\*\*\*\*I was the pastor of a poor handful of the faithful, and myself only an inexperienced youth. The up-grade looked steep, long and lonesome. I could not get the word out of my thoughts. Now my lonesomeness was past - some. My way had become smooth enough. There was hope on the up-grade. But what of the thousands of other lonesome priests who, to me were represented by that courageous but sad figure I still could see on the station platform at Ellsworth? HAD I no obligation towards them? Certainly none in justice - but in charity? I did not know. But if I had none, why had God sent me out to see all these desolate places? It seemed as if His Finger had guided me to go, and as if His Hand had always led me to the very worst. I remembered all the others, even worse than Ellsworth, for Ellsworth had at least a resident priest and they had none - some had not even dry-goods box churches. How many communities were churchless in this adopted country that I already loved? I kept looking out the car window to catch sight of steeples with a cross. Alas! how few there were - not one for every ten towns! There was certainly something wrong. But was it my business to try to right it? The church had her bishops. Then Bishop Hennessey came to my thoughts, though he never knew it, down there in Wichita. "What can I do without money?" he had said. "There is no society to assist these poor places. The bishops are powerless without outside help." But it was that lonesome figure on the





on the station platform at Ellsworth that spoke last and most effectively that morning. He had gotten to my heart; for he was going through what I had suffered and worse, far worse.

By this time there were tears in my eyes. At my feet was my battered suitcase, paper and pencil in it. I took it up and put it on my knees as a desk. The pencil was in my hand and the paper in front of me before I really knew what I was going to do. In a vague sort of way, I began to write. I had no idea of doing anything more than telling the Ellsworth story, and finding some editor to publish it as a means of getting help for the lonesome priest back there on the platform. I knew I could put my heart in the appeal; but I was not sure any editor would accept my crude composition. But why worry about that? The thing to do now was to write and leave the rest to God. So the story began with tears in my eyes, and thus it ran:

### THE STORY

I know a little "shanty" in the west, patched and desolate, above whose creaks and cracks the blizzard moans and chills, cellarless, stairless and dreary. Built on low prairie land, the excuse for a garden about it floods with water when the rains come, so that the tumbling old fence with its network of weeds, falling, fail to hide the heart-breaking desolation. The "shanty" has three rooms; the first a combination of office, library and bedroom. In one corner is a folding bed; in another a desk; in another, curtained off with cheap print, is an improvised wardrobe. Against a wall stands a poor bookcase, while a few chairs are scattered about. The next room is also a combination for eating and sleeping. A table is near the wall, a bed is in the corner, and close by are a washstand and a few chairs. Back of all is the third room, kitchen, coal bin, utility, and what-not?

Whose shanty is it? Who lives there?

A pioneer on the vast plains, advance guard of civilization, trying in a sod hut to compromise between the longings within him and the wilderness that overwhelms by its lonely savagery without?

No!

The hut of a negro huddled away on the outskirts of a great city?

No!

A squatter on the railroad right-of-way?

No!

It is the rectory of a Catholic parish in a town of two thousand inhabitants, in a well-settled state of the Union. And today it is the home of an educated, cultured gentleman, a priest, who has left his worldly chances behind him for this!

Across the street stands a shaky, once white building mounted by a cross, the only sign of its high and holy mission. The steps shake as you mount them. The floor trembles at your tread. The rough, unsightly pews are the acme of discomfort, and a house painter's desecrating brush has touched the altar and the Holy of Holies. No vestry. The confessional is literally a box. The vestments are few and tattered. Not a footstep sounds from fortnight to fortnight across the threshold of the Hidden





God but His priest's, as alone he comes daily to offer up the mighty redeeming Sacrifice, or steals before the altar, to watch and pray, and perchance - who could blame him? - to sob down his discouragement before this tawdry throne of his Master.

### Why Alone?

Because his people do not care. The decades of neglect, when neglect was the only thing possible, have left the scattered few unmindful. Do not think, gentle reader, that I am drawing with rough charcoal and tinting with pigments from my imagination. I am drawing with a well tempered pen, and using the colors of fact.

One priest died in this place a short year before this priest came, died of a fever bred by malarial surroundings, died while his sister was speeding from cultured Boston to share his exile, only to find she had passed her brother's body on his last journey home. Other priests followed; none stayed long enough to die except this one. He will stay. The timid, shrinking eye fights to master the determined expression of Western mouth and jaw, and they win. He is working and working hard, against the odds of indifference and irreligion; working to save for the children the inestimable gift of Faith which the parents have forgotten how to appreciate. Yes, he will win as surely as God reigns and His grace lives.

This is not a solitary case. It may be the worst I have personally known, but men who have traveled in our land see how many other places are sadly needing the help that, it is evident, this one needs. The young priest who labors here has been making an effort to get out of the malaria-breeding house. He has four hundred dollars pledged to him, after the work of months, and after meeting rebuke and discouragement everywhere.

"I can give you nothing", said one indifferent. "Let the parish die".

"Nothing", said another. "What do I care? My children are Protestants, anyway".

"Oh, go live somewhere else, where a priest is appreciated", said another.

These words were true. He will get his poor home someday, but will he ever get his church? Not in fifty years without help. And in fifty years what will be left?

The years of struggle we Catholics of America have passed through, when every parish was really a mission, even in the great cities, have blinded us to the fact that our fight has not yet ended, but has simply been transferred. The amazing progress of Catholicity in the centers has lulled us into a feeling of security in our own strength with consequence indifference and blindness to present needs. So we have built up in the center, and in our confidence have allowed the wings to become weakened. We have neglected the outposts. But while all this was doing within, it might be part of wisdom to learn what activity has manifested itself without. (He tells how several Protestant churches supply aid to new groups)

end of quote





So Father Kelley saw the plight of Father Luckey at Ellsworth as the instrument in God's hands to push someone into action to help priests in circumstances like those of Father Luckey.

Quoting again

These letters changed a timid and half-frightened young advocate into a determined pleader. They made him resolve to do himself what he had only been urging others to do. But how do it himself? Assuredly, he must have helpers, and especially a powerful protector whose name and position would make up for his lack of both.

end of quote

Many contacts were made with Bishops and Archbishops before he got one interested enough and in a position to help develop a plan for Catholic church extension. The help came in the person of Archbishop Quigley newly appointed as Archbishop of Chicago. The history of this great Society founded in 1905 is well known, but the part played by Father Luckey is not so well known. Father Luckey assisted The Catholic Extension Society in any way he could, for the Society had given \$2,000. to help erect a church at Ellsworth where the first Mass was celebrated on Oct. 20, 1911. In 1913, after 9 years at Ellsworth, Father Luckey was transferred to Manhattan.

This article prepared by  
Mrs. Alex Irvine in  
April, 1961





## ST. PATRICK'S ON THE ELBOW

The establishment of Ft. Riley in 1853 hastened the settlement of the surrounding territory. Carpenters and masons were especially in demand; teamsters were needed between Ft. Leavenworth, Ft. Riley and Ft. Larned. People who had feared homesteading without a chance of outside work to bring in necessary cash, took advantage of this opportunity. Homesteads were picked out, log cabins erected to shelter the families until a better, larger, sawed lumber or stone house could be built. In suitable weather, the men worked away from home while the mother and children worked at home.

In the mid-1850's, Irish Catholics settled east of the junction of the Blue and Kansas Rivers near Elbow Creek.

From 1859 to 1867, a little French Jesuit, Father Louis Dumortier, would saddle a pony, put articles necessary for Mass in the saddle bags, leave the home Mission at St. Marys to travel over trails, ford streams so he could say Mass at some home wherever a few Catholics could gather. He baptised babies and married young couples. Thus, the religious needs of the Elbow Catholics were administered. He was a welcome guest in pioneer homes and said Mass in the homes of Glenns, Cunningshams, Peaks, Conroys, Dempseys, Dowlings, McCoys and Neckelmans. These visits were repeated enough that the gray pony would go ahead, when tired of riding, Father Dumortier would dismount and walk toward the homestead. All of these families except Peaks lived north of the present Hi-way 24. Peaks lived south of this Hi-way in the community recently known as Swamp Angel.

The first baptism recorded at Elbow was that of John Dempsey, son of Bernard and Mary Dempsey on Dec. 19, 1861. (John Dempsey was the father of Mrs. Mayme Pillsbury and the late Martin Dempsey.)

Before his death in 1867, Father Dumortier had organized 25 congregations and had supervised the building of churches at Rock Creek, Ogden, Junction City, Solomon, Chapman and Elbow. The following was copied from the Diary of Father Dumortier:

(2nd entry)....On the 5 of April 1864 I put in to the hands of Malachi Glenn (father of P. C. Glenn and grandfather of many Seven Dolors parishioners) 115 dollars for the porpus of building the church on Elbow Creek.

(1st entry) ...on the 8th of March 1864 a deed of 5 acres of land was made by Tobias Neckelman et Elizabeth Neckelman in order to build a Catholic church upon it.

Signed L. Dumortier

On the 17 September 1865 I put into the hand of M Glenn \$50 toward finishing the church in all \$165

On the 10th Dec. I advanced to the Elbow church \$59.63

On 4th March 1867) I got from Rev T. Diels the collection for Elbow church which was \$20 dollars. (Such collections were probably offerings for baptisms, marriages, etc., which are considered personal gifts to the officiating priest. Being extremely charitable even for a Jesuit, he kept nothing for himself but spent gifts for Mission needs)

(Rev. T. Diels was the treasurer at St. Mary Mission)

End of Quote





This first church was a stone building 20x30 ft. built under the supervision of John McCoy. It stood in the northeast corner of the property and faced west. (A road angled across the property then. It was moved to the section line before the second church was built.) Although Father Dumortier writes in his diary that in all \$165 was given toward the building, there must have been other donations and, or a great deal of volunteer labor, for the contract for the Elbow School of about the same size built in 1870 was for \$800.00.

In 1866, there were 70 Catholics to occupy the new church. About this time, the following families were in the parish: John McCoy, Dan McCoy, Daniel Cunningham, Wm. Hackett, Malachy Glenn, George Parker, John Conroy, James Conroy, Bernard Dempsey, Mathew Doyle, Matt Peak, John Brockish and possibly a few others. The Neckelmans, donors of the church grounds lived nearby. Although Mr. Neckelman was not converted until some years later, the priest was always welcome to their home. They kept a special guest room for the priests.

The Elbow congregation was saddened by the death of Father Dumortier in 1867 at Ft. Harker (near Ellsworth). He had gone there to administer to soldiers who were stricken with plague. He contracted the disease and died amid very uncomfortable surroundings. Father Rimmelle, S.J., served the parish until 1871 when he was replaced by Father P. L. Van der Bergh, S.J. All of these Jesuits worked out of the St. Marys Mission. In 1875, Father Lager, a diocesan priest, was sent to reside at Rock Creek (Flush) with Wamego, Elbow and Manhattan as his missions. In 1879, Father Nuttmann became the second resident pastor of Rock Creek with its three missions. He assisted the Mahattan Catholics to buy the Methodist's first church in Manhattan, when they built a new one. Up to this time, the Catholic congregations of Elbow, McDowell and Ogden were all larger than Manhattan, but in 1881, the Bishop of Leavenworth appointed Father Ennis as resident pastor of Manhattan, with Elbow, McDowell and Ogden as Missions. Perhaps Manhattan's central location or foresight of greater development there may have influenced the Bishop's action.

About 1883, the original church was torn down. It was the expressed wish of Bishop Fink that the building should not be rebuilt but that the congregation unite with Manhattan. Contrary to his command, the church was rebuilt. This new church faced east. The Barry burial lot with several tombstones located back of the first church was now in front of the new church. For their disobedience, Bishop Fink placed an interdict on the parish. The affair was settled during Father Lee's pastorate at Manhattan (1886-1889). We know of baptisms performed in the church in 1888, so the interdict only lasted 3 or 4 years. During the interdict, Mass was said occasionally in private homes and some baptisms were performed at these times.

Riley County was transferred from the Leavenworth to the Concordia Diocese in 1897 (Concordia Diocese had been established in 1887). With this change, St. Patrick's on the Elbow became a mission of Wamego for 17 years.

Two frame rooms were added to the back of the church and Father Schwann who attended this mission from Wamego built a bell tower and vestibule in 1905.

This second church was struck by lightning in 1907 or 1908 and burned with all its contents. Under the direction of Father Hundt of Wamego, it was rebuilt using the old stone walls. A sanctuary, sacristy and furnace were added. With the insurance received and by the generosity of the people, the church was completed, frescoed, and thoroughly furnished debt free. The K of C of Flush donated the Altar. All three altars and Communion rail were beautiful with natural wood finish. A linen Communion Cloth was attached to the Communion rail. A statue of St. Patrick was placed on the high Altar; statues of the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Virgin were placed on





the side altars.

In 1914, it seemed more satisfactory to everyone to have Elbow returned as a mission of Manhattan. Manhattan's Seven Dolors had lost its Missions of Ogden and McDowell in 1913 when Ogden was given a resident pastor with McDowell as a Mission. Father Luckey, then pastor at Manhattan, took charge and remained as pastor as long as the parish existed except for a year in 1918-1919, he alternated with Father Hundt and when Father Brown substituted for Father Luckey when he was an army Chaplain for a few months.

St. Patrick's congregation was composed entirely of farm families. With the advent of power farm machinery, farm acreages increased with a corresponding loss of farm families. Better roads and motor transportation made distances less time consuming and more comfortable. The Manhattan parish was experiencing rapid growth, so after a few years of reduced services, the church was closed in December, 1928. Thereafter, the parishioners attended Seven Dolors.

Although always a mission church, there were enough Catholic services supplementing the training in good Catholic homes to rear generations of Catholics in the community with few defections. Percentage-wise, there were a large number of converts and community spirit between Catholics and non-Catholics was cordial. For many years, there were two Sundays Masses a month, Masses on holidays and All Souls' Day. Benediction usually followed Sunday Mass (see description of a Sunday service on the Elbow). After Benediction, there were Catechism classes for the children and there were weekday classes during the four months of public school vacation. Children walked or rode horseback to attend these classes. First Communion classes were held often and Confirmation occasionally.

Each fall, there was Thirteen Hours Adoration. For the evening service, families brought coaloil lamps to place on the wide window sills. The board of the public school was considerate enough to dismiss school on the Monday that concluded the Adoration, so the teacher and pupils could attend the closing exercises. School could have been held in the afternoon, but non-Catholic parents living at a distance from the school objected to half days of school.

No janitor was ever hired. Either volunteers or assigned families took turns cleaning the church before each Mass Sunday and once a year everyone turned out for a general cleaning. Building fires came under a similar schedule - at least a parishioner performed that chore.

The first couple married in the Elbow church were John Eckart and Joeanna Wiesman; their granddaughter, Rose Cunningham and George Irvine were the last couple married there in 1926.

By 1938, the vacated church needed repairs. The Bishop of Kansas City in Kansas, in whose diocese it was located thought it should be dismantled. The Flush Parish paid \$200 for the building, which, besides the stone had huge wood rafters and joists and other wood parts. This material was hauled to Flush and used to build a hall near their St. Joseph's Church. The old foundation flush with the ground may still be seen just north of the occupied part of the Cemetery.

Previously, on advice of Bishop Johannes of Kansas City, the furnishings had been donated to needy parishes. The altar, monstrance and chalice were given to Father Grotaers for the St. Joseph's of the Valley Church near Leavenworth for their new church (the old church was wrecked by a tornado). The side altars and statues of the Sacred Heart and Blessed Virgin, the set of bas-relief stations of the cross,





the candle sticks, confessional and pews went to Father Angelus, O.F.M. for the church of Our Lady, a negro church in Kansas City, Kansas. The better vestments, some altar cloths, ciborium and tower bell were taken to Seven Dolors. The vestment case, ordinary vestments, linens, organ and whatever was left, went to the Mexican Chapel in Emporia.

This folder contains a picture of the church (second).

### St. Patrick's Cemetery

There may have been and probably were burials earlier than the following, but either there is no stone to mark the grave or the inscription is illegible. A single marble slab carries these two inscriptions:

Rosie	Augustus
Died Feb. 9 - 1867	Died Oct. 22 - 1866
Aged	Aged
1 yr-3mos-24das	3 yrs-6mos-16das.

Children of  
Mathias & Christina Peak

(This Rosie was the first child baptised in Manhattan. It was performed at the time of the first Mass in Manhattan at the home of her parents)

On a stone in the Barry Lot is this inscription:

Fannie  
Dau. of  
James & Mary  
Barry  
Died Sep 21-1867  
Aged 4 yrs-1 mo.

Inscriptions on the stone of the donors of the property:

Tobias E. Neckelman	Elizabeth
Born-July 19-1812	His Wife
Died-Jan.24-1899	Born-Nov.12-1822
	Died-Jan.28-1899

It was not unusual for new babies to be named the same as a deceased brother or sister in the pioneer families.

In the older part of the cemetery, the inscriptions on the stones indicate many deaths among infants, youths, and young men and women.

After the closing of the Elbow Church, the Cemetery was neglected and presented an unsightly appearance. Only a few volunteered funds and work to maintain it. A meeting was called for all persons interested in the Cemetery. A permanent organization was formed with officers, a constitution and by-laws in 1946.





Relatives of those buried there raised \$4,000 for a perpetual care fund. The Bishop of Kansas City in Kansas invests this money and returns the interest to the Association to be used for maintenance and improvement. One half of the money from the sale of lots is added to the Perpetual Fund and the other half used by the local Association. A nice cross costing \$500 was erected by the Bayer Construction Company and the old fence removed in 1961.

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